

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 4331

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SUBJECT: SOVIET STATEMENT ON GUARANTEES OF ME PEACE AND A
PALESTINIAN STATE

REF: A. MOSCOW 4243, B. MOSCOW 4173

1. SUMMARY: IN TWO RECENT COMMUNIQUE (WITH FRANCE AND
GAMBIA) AND IN A PRAVDA COMMENTARY ON ME (MARCH 27) THE SOVIETS
HAVE ADDED FOR "DEPENDABLE GUARANTEES" OF AN ME PEACE TO FORMULAS
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ON THE BASIS OF A ME SETTLEMENT. AT SAME TIME THE SOVIETS CONTINUE

TO FOG THE QUESTION OF JUST WHAT THEY SUPPORT REGARDING A FUTURE PALESTINIAN ENTITY. BUT IN GAMBIA COMMUNIQUE, FOR ONLY THE SECOND TIME THEY EXPRESS OFFICIAL SUPPORT FOR THE PALESTINIAN RIGHT TO CREATE A "STATE." ON MARCH 26 MFA DEPUTY CHIEF NEAR EAST COUNTRIES DEPARTMENT PYRLIN TOLD POLITICAL COUNSELOR (OTHER TOPICS REFTEL A) THAT GUARANTEES WOULD HAVE TO BE A PART OF A ME SETTLEMENT, BUT HE AVOIDED SPECIFICS ABOUT GUARANTORS. HE SAID USSR SUPPORT FOR THE PALESTINIANS' RIGHT TO CREATE A "STATE" IS INHERENT IN SOVIET SUPPORT OF PALESTINIAN "RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION" AND THEREFORE REPRESENTED NO CHANGE IN SOVIET POSITIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. IN THE COMMUNIQUE ON PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC' VISIT (REFTEL B), THE MIDDLE EAST LANGUAGE WENT BEYOND THE RAMBOUILLENT JOINT STATEMENT THAT "RECOGNITION OF THE RIGHT OF EACH OF THE STATES OF THE REGION TO LIVE WITHIN SECURE AND RECOGNIZED BOUNDARIES" MUST BE AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF A ME SETTLEMENT. CHIRAC COMMUNIQUE SPOKE OF SECURING "BY DEPENDABLE GUARANTEES (NADEZHNYMI GARANTIYAMI)" THE RIGHTS OF ALL STATES AND PEOPLES OF ME TO A SELF-DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT EXISTENCE. THE GAMBIA COMMUNIQUE (PRAVDA, MARCH 26) IN ALMOST IDENTICAL LANGUAGE SAID THAT "DEPENDABLE INTERNATIONAL GUARANTEES" OF THE RIGHTS OF ALL STATES AND PEOPLES OF THIS REGION TO SELF-DEPENDENT, INDEPENDENT EXISTENCE AND DEVELOPMENT MUST BE SECURED.

3. ON THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION, THE GAMBIA COMMUNIQUE CALLED FOR SECURING OF THE LEGITIMATE NATIONAL RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIANS "UP TO AND INCLUDING THE CREATION OF AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE." THE FRENCH COMMUNIQUE AND PRAVDA COMMENTARY ON THE ME (MARCH 27), HOWEVER, PULLED BACK TO A LESS PRECISE FORMULA, REFERRING TO PALESTINIAN RIGHT "TO HAVE A NATIONAL HOME (NATSIONALNYYOCHAG)."

4. DURING MARCH 26 CALL ON MFA DEPUTY CHIEF NEAR EAST COUNTRIES DEPARTMENT PYRLIN (OTHER TOPICS REFTEL A) POLITICAL COUNSELOR ASKED PYRLIN WHETHER RECENT OFFICIAL REFERENCES TO DEPENDABLE GUARANTEES AND A PALESTINIAN STATE REPRESENTED SOME CHANGE IN SOVIET POSITIONS ON THESE MATTERS. PYRLIN AVOIDED A DIRECT ANSWER TO THE QUESTION ABOUT GUARANTEES. HE COMMENTED

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THAT THE IDEA OF "INTERNATIONAL GUARANTEES" FOR A ME PEACE SETTLEMENT IS NOT NEW. AT AN EARLIER TIME, HE RECALLED, THE CONCEPT OF FOUR-POWER GUARANTEES HAD BEEN GENERALLY ACCEPTABLE. NOW, HE SAID, THE QUESTION OF GUARANTORS WAS OPEN. THE U.S. AND USSR AS CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE OR THE SECURITY COUNCIL OR SOME OTHER AGREED COMBINATION OF STATES MIGHT SERVE AS GUARANTEEING AUTHORITY. THE SOVIET POSITION IS, HOWEVER, THAT A GENERAL ME SETTLEMENT WILL HAVE TO PROVIDE FOR GUARANTEES.

5. PYRLIN SAID REFERENCE TO PALESTINIANS' RIGHT TO CREATE A "STATE" WAS CONSISTENT WITH CLEARLY STATED SOVIET SUPPORT FOR THE PALESTINIANS' RIGHT TO "SELF-DETERMINATION." SELF-DETERMINATION, HE CLAIMED, INCLUDES THE RIGHT TO FORM A STATE, TO HAVE A NATIONAL HOME, AND TO HAVE STATEHOOD. HOWEVER, HE SAID, THE USSSR TAKES NO POSITION ON WHAT FORM A PALESTINIAN ENTITY SHOULD TAKE. THIS IS A MATTER FOR THE PALESTINIANS, HE MAINTAINED.

6. COMMENT: WE FIND PYRLIN'S CLAIM THAT THERE IS NOTHING NEW IN SOVIET OFFICIAL SUPPORT FOR THE PALESTINIANS' RIGHT TO CREATE A "STATE" DISINGENOUS TO SAY THE LEAST. PREVIOUS SOVIET PUBLIC STATEMENTS (WITH EXCEPTION OF GROMYKO'S SPEECH IN DAMASCUS FEBRUARY 2) HAVE CLEARLY AND DELIBERATELY AVOIDED REFERRING TO A PALESTINIAN "STATE," WE, THEREFORE, STRONGLY SUSPECT THAT ITS OFFICIAL ACCEPTANCE IN GAMBIAN COMMUNIQUE WAS--IN SOVIET TERMINOLOGY--NOT BY ACCIDENT.

7. SOVIETS MAY HAVE SEVERAL REASONS FOR OFFICIALLY RECORDING SUPPORT FOR THE PALESTINIAN RIGHT TO INDEPENDENCE AT THIS TIME. (PREVIOUS SOVIET STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT FOR "STATEHOOD" AND A PALESTINIAN "NATIONAL HOME," IT SHOULD BE NOTED, HAVE NOT NECESSARILY IMPLIED PALESTINIAN INDEPENDENCE). WITH RESUMPTION OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE NOW STRONG POSSIBILITY, THE SOVIETS MAY THINK IT NECESSARY TO GIVE EXPLICIT ASSURANCE TO THE PALESTINIANS THAT A POSSIBLE COMPROMISE FORMULA TO ALLOW PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION AT THE MEPC AS PART OF SOME OTHER DELEGATION WILL NOT PREJUDICE THE PALESTINIANS' ULTIMATE RIGHT TO OBTAIN INDEPENDENCE AS A PART OF A ME SETTLEMENT. MOSCOW MAY HAVE FELT IMPELLED TO COUNTER JORDANIAN PUBLIC REPORTS THAT IN TALKS WITH JORDANIAN OFFICIALS VINOGRADOV WAFFLED ABOUT JORDAN'S FUTURE ROLE VIS-A-VIS THE WEST BANK (REFTEL A). SOVIETS MAY
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ALSO HAVE SOME RESERVATIONS ABOUT POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PALESTINIANS' FUTURE INDEPENDENCE OF ASAD'S PROPOSAL TO FORM A PLO-SYRIAN JOINT POLITICAL-MILITARY COMMAND. AND FINALLY, WITH AN ARAFAT VISIT NOW EVIDENTLY PLANNED FOR LATE APRIL, MOSCOW MAY WANT TO APPEAR SOMEWHAT MORE FORTHCOMING TOWARD THE PALESTINIANS BY MOVING OFFICIAL SOVIET POSITIONS A BIT CLOSER TO THE RABAT FORMULAS.
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